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University for Peace

University for Peace

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The University for Peace has been training leaders for peace for the past 35 years. It is the world's leading educational institution in the field of peace and conflict resolution, in its pursuit of the mandate given to it by the General Assembly in 1980. As it prepares to celebrate its thirty-fifth anniversary, the University continues its pursuit of academic excellence through the systematic and critical study, understanding and analysis of the causes of multiple problems affecting human and global well-being; the exploration and formulation of strategies and practices in various contexts to address such problems and contribute to the processes of peacebuilding and peace formation; the cultivation of modes of thinking, inquiry and pedagogy that are critical, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, integrative, empowering and transformative; and the development of a diverse, inclusive, ethical, creative community of learning, sharing, networking and solidarity on campus and in the global environment.

The new international context and framework of interaction between major international actors have obliged the University to transform itself and assess how it can contribute effectively and successfully to adapting to this new dynamic through education. With our contribution to the work of the United Nations and our vision of the role of other key civil society actors, it is essential that we rethink the University's vision, position and tasks within the context of this evolving international system. The various contributions of the University provide new generations of men and women with the knowledge and skills to influence processes of change in favour of peace within the United Nations system, States and civil society organizations, all of which increasingly require specific knowledge of how to address the tensions, threats and conflicts in today's international system.

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The present report summarizes the activities and development of the University, as well as its successes and challenges, during the period 2012-2015.

The University is undergoing a process to reinvent and renew its activities within the context of both its thirty-fifth anniversary and the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. One of the most significant changes pertains to the recent process of academic reform to align the University's activities with those being prioritized by the United Nations and reinforce its academic excellence. The University is currently implementing close to a dozen joint academic programmes with high-level universities in various parts of the world.

More than 1,600 alumni of the University, who originate from almost every Member State of the United Nations, are working for peace in every region of the world.

The current international context demands an expansion of training and educating for peace, especially with regard to open and increasingly more complex conflicts, interrelations between local, national, regional and global spheres and strong but ominous links between politics and criminal activity. The University provides such a response. In addition, the explicit and consistent support of the States Members of the United Nations will be essential in carrying out the University's mission. This will only be accomplished through the ongoing academic training of future leaders of Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector on peaceful conflict resolution and the relationship between peace, development, human rights and environmental protection as the foundation for economic development and increased equality. For the University to successfully transform itself in order to have a greater impact on future generations of world leaders, the General Assembly may consider augmenting the University's capacity by providing resources through assessed budgetary contributions for a limited period of five years, until the transformation is accomplished and extrabudgetary resources become available.

With the support and collaboration of the States Members of the United Nations, the Secretariat and the rest of the United Nations system, the University will continue to prepare new generations for their fundamental role and responsibility in resolving conflicts and promoting opportunities for cooperation for peace.

I. Introduction

1. The University for Peace was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 35/55, "with a clear determination to provide humanity with an international institution of higher education for peace and with the aim of promoting among all human beings the spirit of understanding, tolerance and peaceful coexistence, to stimulate cooperation among peoples and to help lessen obstacles and threats to world peace and progress, in keeping with the noble aspirations proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations". It was invited to establish its main campus in Costa Rica, which has served as its host country ever since.

2. The present report, which is submitted to facilitate consideration by the General Assembly of the item entitled "University for Peace", pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/83, contains a summary of the progress made by the University during the period 2012-2015 and highlights both its opportunities for growth and its challenges.

3. The present report includes an overview of the main activities at the University's campus in Costa Rica, as well as those carried out by its regional centres and affiliated institutions. It also highlights the University's relationships with the United Nations and other United Nations-related bodies, as well as with the host country. The report highlights the University's recent process of academic reform, its current financial situation and its short-term and long-term development strategy. It also describes the substantial progress made towards developing high-quality education and training programmes and relationships with other academic institutions to reach as many interested students as possible, as well as the University's efforts to relaunch its image and attract new partners and donors.

4. The General Assembly, in its resolution 64/83, noted the progress made by the University in developing and carrying out innovative programmes on critical subjects related to peace and security, and requested the Secretary-General to consider ways to further strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and the University. In addition, the Assembly encouraged Member States, intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and interested individuals to contribute to the programmes, the trust fund, when established for the University, or the core budget of the University to enable it to continue to perform its valuable work.

II. University for Peace in 2015

A. Thirty-five years of the University

5. During the past 35 years, the University has been guided by the mandate of the General Assembly and has sought to support the main objectives of the United Nations in matters of peace and international security through the training of new generations of professionals with the ability to resolve conflicts through understanding, tolerance and coexistence, on the basis of cooperation and the values of the United Nations system.

6. The University has a proven record of contributing to the educational training of leaders in the field of peace and conflict resolution related to the four basic pillars of the United Nations: peace and security, human rights, development and the

rule of law. More than 1,600 alumni from 112 countries have leveraged their training, experience and skills and used them to have a positive impact in their professional activities. The majority of our students and alumni are women, who play a critical role in peacebuilding and peacekeeping operations at both the local and the international levels.

7. Conflict and its impact are increasingly complex. Understanding the various motivations of key international actors is an urgent task in our globalized world. We require more knowledge to better educate those in charge of resolving and transforming conflicts, understanding the links between the political, social, economic, cultural, religious and ethnic dimensions and dealing with criminal activity in the generation and development of conflicts. In addition, a gender focus is required to analyse and search for solutions. The people responsible for designing and envisioning the role of the University stressed that the persistence of war ends with education. Similarly, they reaffirmed that peace was an indispensable obligation attained primarily through education. Disarmament efforts are essential, but they cannot be successful without a parallel effort in terms of education, which represents the main challenge to nations and humankind in the twenty-first century.

8. The thirty-fifth anniversary of the University will be commemorated with an international high-level seminar to be held on 3 and 4 December 2015. The topics will reflect the new priorities of the United Nations and, more generally, new risks, challenges and threats in the international system, as well as the opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.

B. Institutional changes

9. In June 2013, the Council of the University elected a new rector, Francisco Rojas Aravena, who has significant experience in the field of international relations and international security. His tenure will expire in June 2018.

10. The Council is composed of 17 members, 10 of whom are appointed by the Secretary-General and 7 ex officio members. The current members include the following individuals appointed by the Secretary-General: Aristides Royo (Panama), President of the Council; Hal Klepak (Canada), Vice-President of the Council; Jean Arnault (France); Alicia Bárcena (Mexico); Jean Jacques Graisse (Belgium); Wakako Hironaka (Japan); Monica K. Juma (Kenya); Roza Otunbayeva (Kyrgyzstan) and Fernando Blasco (Argentina), as well as the following ex officio members: Francisco Rojas Aravena (Chile), University Rector; Judy Cheng-Hopkins (Malaysia), Chancellor; Pilar Alvarez-Laso (Mexico), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Director-General Representative; David Malone (Canada), Rector of the United Nations University; Juany Guzman (Costa Rica), Representative of the Government of Costa Rica; and Mercedes Peñas (Spain), Representative of the Government of Costa Rica and First Lady of Costa Rica.

C. Rodrigo Carazo campus

11. The University's main campus, named after the late former President of Costa Rica and University founder Rodrigo Carazo, is located 30 kilometres south-west of San José, within a nature reserve. The University's campus comprises 303 hectares, 300 of which represent the last remnant of primary forest in the central valley of

Costa Rica. The campus comprises 2 per cent of the protected zone of El Rodeo, which is part of the Mora municipality, and is home to various fauna, including monkeys, deer, reptiles, butterflies and more than 300 species of birds, as well as more than 100 varieties of trees. The protection of this forest represents a great opportunity for the development of scientific studies on tropical biodiversity.

12. The peace park is open to the general public and offers recreational areas and the natural beauty of the area's biodiversity.

13. The park's monument to disarmament, work and peace symbolizes the fundamental values of the University and the main traditions of Costa Rica that have centred on these values during the past 70 years.

D. Academic reform

14. During the 2014-2015 academic year, the University decided to undergo a process of academic reform in an effort to reinvent and renew itself in order to contribute to its goal of providing future generations with the knowledge, skills and tools to influence processes of change in favour of peace and development within the United Nations system, States and other sectors that require increasingly more specific knowledge about how to address current tensions, threats, risks and conflicts. Furthermore, in the light of substantial changes at the United Nations to commemorate its seventieth anniversary, it has become essential for the University to examine its academic structure and ensure that it aligns with the four pillars set out in the Charter of the United Nations, the guidelines of the General Assembly and the new demands within the field of peace and conflict resolution and transformation.

15. In order to address the set of tasks involved in carrying out the academic reforms required by the University, its Council has approved the partial implementation of the reform in the 2015/16 academic year to allow for adjustments to be made to the various academic programmes, followed by a full implementation beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year.

16. The full implementation of academic reform will be attained through the direct and effective participation of the Council, University authorities, faculty, students, alumni and staff. Current University policy promotes and affirms the participation of all stakeholders directly related to the University in its mission to promote peace and international stability.

1. Master's degree programmes

17. The University continues to offer innovative master's degree programmes in areas related to peace studies, international law, gender studies, the environment and sustainable development. Currently, eight master's degree programmes are offered at the main campus in gender and peacebuilding; international peace studies; media, peace and conflict studies; peace education; international law and human rights; international law and the settlement of disputes; environment, development and peace, with specializations in environmental security and governance, sustainable natural resource management, climate change policy or sustainable food systems; and responsible management and sustainable economic development. The themes of gender, race, religious, class and ethnic perspectives, as well as those related to the

lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, are incorporated into the academic programmes.

18. As of 2011, the University offers an online master's degree programme in sustainable peace in the contemporary world. Through interactive online discussions between instructors and students from around the world, this programme gives global access to mid-career professionals who, for various reasons, are unable to study on campus. Students can decide to take these online courses as part of the online master's degree programme or as individual courses for credit, certificate programmes or training.

2. Special programmes

19. The University maintains dual-degree, dual-campus and joint programmes with high-level universities around the world. These interesting options permit students to obtain more than one degree by studying at more than one institution. Currently, the University offers the following joint programmes with partner universities:

Dual degree/campus programmes

(a) American University, United States of America: American University students receive both a master's degree in international affairs from American University and a master's degree in natural resources and sustainable development from the University for Peace;

(b) Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Republic of Korea: both institutions award a master's degree, depending on the student's area of concentration, in the fields of law, communications (media) and sustainable development;

(c) Ateneo de Manila University, the Philippines: with the support of The Nippon Foundation, students in this programme can choose to pursue a master's degree in global politics from Ateneo de Manila University or a master's degree from the University for Peace;

(d) Brandeis University, United States of America: students from Brandeis University receive a master's degree in coexistence and conflict from Brandeis University and a master's degree in international law and human rights from the University for Peace. University for Peace students can apply to Brandeis University to obtain a degree in coexistence and conflict;

(e) Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, Colombia: students from Pontificia Universidad Javeriana receive a master's degree in human rights and culture of peace (taught in Spanish), in addition to the possibility of applying to the master's degree programme at the University for Peace and receiving a second master's degree. University for Peace students can apply to the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana to obtain a master's degree in human rights and culture of peace;

Joint master's degree programmes

(a) International University of Monaco, Monaco: students enrolled at the International University of Monaco can obtain a master's degree in sustainable

peace through sports and can take online courses from the University of Peace. They also have the option to study at the main campus of the University;

(b) UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education and Oregon State University, United States: the University for Peace will award students a master's degree in environment, development and peace with a specialization in environmental security. For its part, the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education will award a Master of Science degree in water, cooperation and peace. In addition, students will have the option to continue at Oregon State University for a Juris Doctor or Master of Laws degree;

(c) Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia: students enrolled in this programme receive a master's degree in peace and security.

20. The University will continue, wherever possible, to develop similar programmes to expand its reach around the world with key postgraduate institutions and think tanks whose work supports the mission and values of the United Nations.

3. Doctoral programme

21. The University offers a doctoral programme in peace and conflict studies. It is designed for talented researchers who will pursue innovation in the field of peace studies. In addition, practitioners can transform their experiences into scientific knowledge that can be systematized and disseminated through academic publications. The themes on which the doctoral candidates focus correspond to those that comprise the most significant current debates at the United Nations and in the international system.

4. Undergraduate credit-building

22. As a result of its partnership with the University of California, Berkeley, in the United States, the University for Peace is now admitting senior undergraduates, on a case-by-case basis, to study at the University for up to one semester. Qualifying students can take the University's master's degree programme courses and the University will award credits towards a master's degree, which the student can later pursue at the University or elsewhere. This approach, which benefits both the student and the institution, encourages undergraduates to pursue their studies at the postgraduate level. Furthermore, during the summer current Berkeley students attend a six-week training programme on human security at the University campus in Costa Rica. This programme involves a community service component.

5. Semester abroad programme

23. Courses related to peacebuilding are increasingly in demand. Accordingly, the University offers study-abroad options for up to one semester for qualified graduate-level students from other universities. The model has proved successful for all interested parties and is an important way for the University to fulfil its mandate, given that the programmes of many partner universities can be enriched through the incorporation of peace studies based on the pillars of the United Nations, as well as gender inclusion.

6. Capacity-building programme

24. The University carried out highly successful capacity-building programmes, which are regarded as a model for development policy. In recent years, thanks to the financial support of the Government of the Netherlands, the University developed important programmes in Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and South-East Asia.

25. With funds from the Dutch Postcode Lottery, the University is implementing a three-year project on conflict resolution in the Karamoja region of Kenya and Uganda with the Uganda Martyrs University. This project is aimed at mitigating the cross-border pastoral violence in the region through people-to-people approaches that employ peacebuilding, sports, community theatre and women-led peace initiatives.

26. Since 2007, the University has been working with Ateneo de Manila University on a programme to build the capacity of Asian professionals in order to prepare them to take up leading positions in international organizations working on peacebuilding around the world. The programme, known as the Asian Peacebuilders Scholarship, is sponsored and supported by The Nippon Foundation and offers up to 30 scholarships annually for professionals from Asia: 15 from Japan and 15 from South-East Asia. In 2014, the University and Ateneo de Manila University gave the Scholarship a dual-degree format. This enriched programme offers intensive, specialized language training to facilitate the participation of professionals with lower levels of English proficiency, as well as the hands-on design and implementation of an intensive field project in Asia. Scholars obtain two master's degrees: one from the University for Peace in an area related to peacebuilding and the second from Ateneo de Manila University in political science, with a major in global politics.

7. Spanish-language courses

27. The University has had a longstanding record of offering master's degree programmes in Spanish since its foundation in 1980. After 2001, the University began to focus its efforts on offering master's degree programmes solely in English. Given that the University headquarters is located in Central America, where the wars of past decades have left a culture of violence in their wake, the University has begun a process of developing a workplan for the region. Since 2012, University administrators have met with key stakeholders in the region, including the Central American Integration System and several international cooperation partners.

28. The University has been offering courses in Spanish in an effort to engage with the Ibero-American community and with the many students from the region seeking an education in peace studies in Spanish, in accordance with its mission.

29. The University offers a programme in Honduras that seeks to train 100 judges, prosecutors and public defenders at the postgraduate level. Graduates receive a master's degree in international law and human rights, with the support of and in association with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and in coordination with the United Nations Development Programme. This programme also includes a short course designed for the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights of the Office of the Attorney General of Honduras, with the support of the European Union.

30. Furthermore, the University, in consultation with the Government of Honduras, is exploring the possibility of opening a small regional office in that country.

31. In June 2015, the Council of the University approved a pilot master's degree programme in Spanish on conflict resolution, peace and development. This is an effort to provide new learning opportunities to students from the region on topics related to conflict resolution and transformation. In order to increase the presence of the University at the regional and international levels, this programme may also be of interest to those outside the region who wish to have a multicultural experience with students primarily from Latin American States. This programme will launch in 2016 on the University's main campus in Costa Rica.

8. Accreditation

32. Since 2005, the University has implemented a systematic external evaluation of all its master's degree programmes. The external evaluations assess the academic quality and performance of each programme and provide recommendations for improvement.

33. The University joined the Costa Rican national higher education accreditation system in 2008 and is working to have all its programmes accredited as soon as possible. In October 2012, the University presented it with the reports of four programmes within the Department of Environment and Development. This report was examined by the higher education accreditation system and the programmes were accredited in March 2014.

34. The second phase of the accreditation process involves the Department of International Law and Human Rights. In August 2014, the University submitted the reports of two programmes within the Department to the higher education accreditation system. During the last week of June 2015, evaluators visited the University to assess the accreditation request. The final decision of the higher education accreditation system is expected by the second semester of 2015.

35. The third phase of the process of academic accreditation will focus on the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies and its programmes in international peace studies, gender and peacebuilding, media and peace and peace education. The reports will be submitted during the October 2015 call for accreditation by the higher education accreditation system.

36. The final programme to be presented for academic accreditation will be the master's degree programme in responsible management and sustainable economic development. However, higher education accreditation system regulations requires a period of maturity of at least five years. This programme began during the 2009/10 academic year, which means it will be eligible for accreditation after this upcoming year. The University is planning to present the request for accreditation in 2016.

9. Enrolment

37. As is the case with many educational institutions, full-time enrolment at the University's main campus has suffered owing to the effects of the international economic crisis. The number of applications has remained stable over time, but many students cannot afford to pursue studies without financial support or access to student loans. Such support from Governments, foundations and the private sector has become essential to guarantee access to these programmes, regardless of the students' financial status. Currently, many applicants do not pursue their applications when they learn that the University cannot offer substantial scholarship assistance.

38. In accordance with the guidelines established by the Council of the University and its medium-term and long-term strategic plans, the University is working towards achieving an enrolment of 500 students by 2020 in its various master's degree programmes. That number of students will allow the University to develop a critical mass of highly qualified professionals equipped with the correct training and tools who are capable of transforming complex international conflicts. In this sense, the University seeks to establish several international scholarship funds with the support of the signatory States to the Charter of the University and international philanthropic institutions. Training new leaders for conflict resolution will ensure that States Members of the United Nations have appropriate personnel with skills in dealing with new and more complex threats. The University, in partnership with Member States, has the capacity to train such professionals and thus transform future conflicts.

10. University alumni

39. The University's more than 1,600 alumni live and work in every region of the world. The vast majority of them work in a peacebuilding capacity in their home countries and internationally, often on the front line of conflict situations. Currently, the highest percentage of our alumni work for NGOs, but many of our graduates go on to work within the United Nations system and in various other international humanitarian capacities. Some now teach at the university level and work for academic institutions, while others have joined their national governments in diverse and influential fields, including international affairs, electoral tribunals and environmental policy. Another significant portion of our alumni community is pursuing doctoral degrees.

40. As part of the revitalization and relaunching of the University, its authorities have decided to institutionalize an alumni relations office, the main tasks of which will focus on planning and implementing programmes that keep alumni connected to one another and to the University, encourage and promote the professional development of alumni on an individual level and keep the alumni community aware of the University's developments and needs, thus allowing them to support its medium-term and long-term strategy.

11. Publications

41. The University is promoting a new programme for publications in its areas of expertise, in particular in the area of law and conflict resolution.

E. Subsidiary centres and affiliated institutions

42. With the goal of increasing effective cooperation ties, the University established a new deanship for international cooperation, the mandate of which is to focus the University's efforts on international cooperation, coordinate the work carried out by the regional centres and oversee special projects and relationships with partner universities and other collaborators.

1. Changes to regional offices

43. During the period 2012-2015, the University has embarked on a process of budgetary rationalization in an effort to strengthen its ability to carry out its

mandate. As a result of this process, the regional offices in Geneva and New York have been closed, as well as two associated centres in Montevideo and Bogota.

44. The University has continued to work alongside its Africa programme and the UPEACE Centre The Hague, and recently established a focal point office in Bonn, Germany. Furthermore, the University continues its work alongside the following affiliated centres, located on its campus: Earth Charter International, the Human Rights Centre and the Centre for Executive Education.

2. Africa programme

45. The Africa programme was established in 2002 with the objective of building the capacity of African universities in the areas of peace, gender, conflict, governance, security and development. The programme's undertakings are built around two major pillars: strengthening the teaching, training and learning capacity of African tertiary institutions and enhancing research and publications by African scholars.

46. The Africa programme collaborated in teaching the master's degree programme in gender and peace studies offered by the Cheikh Anta Diop University and Femmes Afrique Solidarité in Dakar and participated in co-teaching programmes under the Great Lakes programme at 10 partner universities.

47. After 2015, the Africa programme will expand its activities to French-speaking universities and launch new joint master's degree programmes in the areas of peace, conflict, governance and security.

48. The Africa programme is currently implementing a peacebuilding programme within the Karamoja region of Kenya and Uganda, mainly through people-to-people strategies, community theatre, transformative sports and women-led initiatives. The project targets cross-border areas to enhance meaningful interactions that could contribute to peaceful coexistence among the pastoral communities there. The project is also aimed at building local capacity through the provision of training on facilitation, teambuilding and fundraising, as well as networking. The project is implemented by the University and supported by the Uganda Martyrs University and Children Peace Initiative, Kenya. This programme is an example of action research and action learning, as the best practices are documented and integrated into teaching, both at the University and local partner universities.

49. The Africa programme is managed by the University regional office in Addis Ababa, which is financially autonomous. Despite financial constraints, the office is operational, but some of its programmes have been reduced. International cooperation and increased donor support are essential for the Africa programme to continue its important work in the region.

3. UPEACE Centre The Hague

50. Since 2012, the University has had a centre in the Peace Palace in The Hague, which offers peace and conflict education courses at the undergraduate level in cooperation with a number of Dutch universities. The focus is currently on peace and conflict studies, water and peace (water diplomacy) and urban peace and security. The centre works with various Dutch and other European partners, as well as experts from the University's global network, to achieve its objectives. A specific task is to promote and facilitate the recruitment of European students to master's

degree programmes and other educational activities at the University's main campus in Costa Rica. Another task is to facilitate the implementation of the activities of Earth Charter International in the Netherlands in cooperation with three partner organizations. The centre is an independent entity under Dutch law and is financially independent from the University. It receives financial support from the Government of the Netherlands, the city of The Hague and Dutch private funds.

4. German focal point

51. In 2014, the University established a focal point office in Bonn, Germany, through which the University has begun cooperation with Heidelberg University, the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law and Osnabrück University. Both Osnabrück University and several Costa Rican-based academic institutions, including the University for Peace, have joined forces to create the Costa Rica Centre, where several joint research and teaching activities are under way. In conjunction with Heidelberg University through its Latin American dependency, the Heidelberg Centre, in collaboration with the Max Planck Institute, the University for Peace carried out its first specialization course in Spanish in 2014.

5. Earth Charter

52. The Earth Charter Centre for Education for Sustainable Development is coordinating the UNESCO Chair on Education for Sustainable Development, which was established in 2012. This is a joint initiative between the University and Earth Charter International. The Centre, in collaboration with partner organizations, helps to foster a generation of citizens who are committed to sustainability values. The focus of the Centre and the UNESCO Chair is at the intersection of sustainability, education and ethical reflection. It has been offering executive programmes on education for sustainability and facilitating research in this field, such as a recent publication on democratic equality, economic inequality and the Earth Charter.

53. The mission of the Earth Charter Centre is "... to promote the transition to sustainable ways of living and a global society founded on a shared ethical framework that includes respect and care for the community of life, ecological integrity, universal human rights, respect for diversity, economic justice, democracy and a culture of peace", with a special focus on educational needs. This project began as a United Nations initiative prior to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, but was carried forward and completed by a global civil society initiative. It is the product of a broad consultation process and a declaration of fundamental ethical principles for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society in the twenty-first century.

54. In an effort to influence policymaking at the national and local levels, Earth Charter International organized an event in March 2015 to identify the synergies among key United Nations educational agendas, including education for sustainability, education for global citizenship and education for responsible consumption. In May 2015, in collaboration with UNESCO, it hosted a Latin American and Caribbean regional expert meeting on climate change education.

55. Recently, the values of the Earth Charter were applauded by Pope Francis in his encyclical "Laudato Si'", by stating that "the Earth Charter asked us to leave behind a period of self-destruction and make a new start, but we have not as yet developed a universal awareness needed to achieve this ... 'Let ours be a time

remembered for the awakening of a new reverence for life, the firm resolve to achieve sustainability, the quickening of the struggle for justice and peace, and the joyful celebration of life'".

6. Human Rights Centre

56. The Human Rights Centre was created within the contours of the stated mission of the University as specified in its Charter. In particular, the mission of the Centre is to promote the understanding, respect for and enjoyment of human rights. The Centre carries out this mission through specialized human rights education, training, capacity-building and awareness-raising activities, and takes a practitioner-based approach to the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights, while promoting the integration of theory and practice. The Centre also takes a multidisciplinary approach to human rights and attaches equal importance to all human rights. The Centre complements the core mandate of the University, which is to provide higher education for peace through postgraduate and doctoral programmes.

7. Centre for Executive Education

57. The University's Centre for Executive Education engages with professionals and university groups through online courses, on-site workshops and customized group programmes. The online programme features a diploma in social innovation and hosted 99 students from 41 countries in 2014. Workshops and university groups allow short-term visitors to interact with the University through dynamic, specialized programmes in education, leadership, social entrepreneurship, sustainable development and other areas.

F. International relations

58. Institutional relations at the highest level were re-established in 2013 with the Government of Costa Rica. Former President Laura Chinchilla visited the University and gave the inaugural speech at the launch of the 2014-2015 academic year. Current President of Costa Rica Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, in his statement to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session in September 2014, said, "If you want peace, prepare for peace." The Government of Costa Rica reaffirmed the importance of the University when it named First Lady Mercedes Peñas as one of its representatives to the Council. Minister for Foreign Affairs Manuel González was the keynote speaker at the opening ceremony of the 2014/15 academic year and Peñas served as keynote speaker at the 2015 commencement ceremony. In addition, the Government of Costa Rica requested technical cooperation from the University with regard to the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States summit and the diplomatic service reform act by its Parliament. In a similar manner, the University has contributed and exchanged important information with other national institutions.

59. With regard to the signatory States of the University's Charter with diplomatic representation in Costa Rica, the University has sought opportunities for interaction and has promoted their participation in its outreach activities, thereby promoting a permanent dialogue.

60. President of Liberia Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf made an official visit to the University, where she delivered a statement in which she said, "We know that to maintain peace we must make education and the employment of our youth a paramount commitment of governance". As part of her first visit to Central America, Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf unveiled a bust erected in her honour in the Garden of Nations on the University's campus.

61. In 2014, judge, professor and human rights scholar Thomas Buergenthal, a survivor of the Auschwitz and Sachsenhausen concentration camps during the Second World War, was awarded an Honoris causa Doctorate degree by the University.

62. University authorities, including its Rector, have been invited to participate in various academic and political meetings organized by Governments and international organizations in order to provide their view on topics within the international agenda, specifically those referring to international and human security and unequal access to justice.

G. Relations with United Nations bodies

63. The University is continually seeking partnerships, visiting scholars and collaborative activities with relevant United Nations bodies. One of the most important areas on which it continues to focus is the career development of alumni within the United Nations system. The University is a member of the United Nations group of institutions in Costa Rica and participates regularly in its sessions.

64. In 2014, University authorities had the opportunity to share and exchange views with the Secretary-General during his brief visit to San José. The Secretary-General emphasized the importance of guaranteeing educational access for all children, the importance of monitoring climate change and the fundamental task of promoting human rights and peace. In 2015, the President of Costa Rica and the Minister for Foreign Affairs met with the Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General to speak at length about the University and its plans to strengthen its capacity to fulfil its mission and, more generally, about cooperation between the United Nations and Costa Rica.

65. The UNESCO Director-General visited the University in June 2013 as part of the international conference and award ceremony for the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize, which was held in San José. The Director-General addressed students and university authorities, stating that UNESCO and the University had common convictions, aspirations and a new vision of educational development, and that peace was a way of life and that teaching must begin in the classroom, given that education was the best tool to overcome poverty and underdevelopment.

66. **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Chair**. In October 2011, a new UNESCO Chair on Education for Sustainable Development was established with the University and Earth Charter International, which is located on the University campus. The signing ceremony was held on 2 February 2012. This is a three-year agreement with UNESCO and Earth Charter International for research and training in education for sustainable development. Earth Charter International will manage the Chair.

67. **General Assembly**. In its resolution 65/11, the Assembly commended the University, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations

Development Fund for Women for their activities in further promoting a culture of peace and non-violence, including the promotion of peace education and activities related to specific areas identified in the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace (see resolution 53/243 B). The Assembly encouraged all three organizations to continue and further strengthen and expand their efforts.

68. **United Nations University**. The University would welcome increased cooperation with the United Nations University in view of the encouragement in that regard set out in the Charter of the University for Peace.

69. **United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs**. The University signed a new cooperation agreement with more than 10 partners to provide scholarships and training to more than 140 women from the South on issues related to peace. This initiative is aimed at broadening women's participation in various fields related to peace by enhancing the diversity of existing networks to increase the critical mass of women experts participating in the planning, decision-making and implementation of disarmament and non-proliferation activities.

70. In 2014, the University established the Elizabeth Odio Benito Chair, in recognition of her career and professional contributions to the field of human rights, including as a judge of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. This Chair promotes studies in the field of human rights and international justice.

H. Community relations

71. The relationship between the University and the local communities of El Rodeo and Ciudad Colón is excellent. University authorities, faculty and students regularly participate in and contribute to the towns' cultural activities. In addition, University students conduct community work throughout the towns and municipal authorities contribute actively to the University by keeping its authorities informed of the work being done and by resolving issues that are critical to the functioning of the University. Both the municipality of Ciudad Colón and the Government of Costa Rica resolved accessibility problems at the University caused by poor road conditions. As part of this relationship, the University provides an annual scholarship to a resident of Ciudad Colón. Master's degree students in the gender and peacebuilding and peace education programmes are presently conducting research projects in Ciudad Colón on violence against women and bullying in schools.

I. Financial situation

72. Notwithstanding the appeal by the Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly in 2009 (A/64/281) and in 2012 (A/67/272), in which the Assembly invited Member States to contribute to the University, very few countries have provided support. International experience shows that universities around the world must rely on endowments and contributions to support themselves.

73. This reality, combined with the impact of the international financial and economic crisis that has reduced student enrolment, made the University face a critical financial situation in 2013. As a result, drastic cost-cutting measures were taken to improve the University's efficiency under a significantly reduced staff. This was achieved without affecting the number of resident faculty members. In spite of

a more restricted budget during the 2013/14 and 2014/15 academic years, it was impossible to avoid incurring a deficit, which requires financial support that goes beyond current efforts. The measures taken have reduced the existing deficit considerably; however, the process of revitalization and relaunch of the University's activities require direct support from the signatories of the University's Charter, as well as all other States that seek to promote the training, through higher education studies, of professionals for peace.

74. The University's objective is to be self-sustaining on the basis of income generated by its teaching and training programmes, the support of its Member States and donations and special projects to sustain its activities. The University extends its special gratitude to The Nippon Foundation for its significant support of the University through its Asia Pacific scholarship programme. In addition, the University thanks and recognizes the Dutch Postcode Lottery for its significant contributions to the University as a whole, with special attention to the programme in the Karamoja region of Africa.

75. For the first time since the University's creation in 1980, authorities have reached an agreement with the Government of Costa Rica, through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to institutionalize a permanent financial contribution to the University on an annual basis. This requires the approval of an additional protocol to the original headquarters agreement, which must be ratified by the Congress of Costa Rica. Other Member States are invited to match this contribution as a sign of their commitment to the mission of the University and in recognition of the important role of Costa Rica in peacebuilding, disarmament and nature conservation.

J. Development strategy 2015-2020

1. Short-term vision

76. The University is initiating a process of revitalizing and relaunching its core activities, as decided by the Council at its twenty-fifth session, held in June 2015. The main objective of this process is to align the University's endeavours with those of its main stakeholders, the United Nations and the signatory States of the Charter of the University, through a process of academic and institutional reform. As a first step, it was necessary to align the academic programmes offered by the University with the new realities being discussed at the United Nations with regard to the post-2015 development agenda and in the light of the Organization's seventieth anniversary. These reforms include the incorporation of increasingly relevant issues, including human trafficking, migration, gender mainstreaming and terrorism.

77. The University will work closely with the international community, focusing on strengthening its ties with the signatory States of its Charter. The University is in a key position to provide training to Government officials, civil society organizations, private sector actors and NGOs. In this regard, the University finds itself in a process of strengthening its capacity to fulfil its mandate by adding high-level professionals with extensive experience to its staff and faculty.

2. Long-term vision

78. The University must promote both its role as an international academic institution and political dialogue, as well as endorse the General Assembly

objectives assigned to it. It has carried out a comprehensive process of academic reform in an effort to better execute its mission. The vision for an even more vigorous and effective institution in the long term includes the consolidation and reinforcement of the capacities of the main campus to serve the entire University system through curriculum development, face-to-face teaching and research and sustained two-way links to the considerable experience and knowledge found in institutional partners in other parts of the world. Strengthening the influence and presence of the University in several regions and an active programme for sharing knowledge for peace, including distance learning and the dissemination of toolkits for teaching, will also be expanded in terms of content and reach.

79. In 30 years, there will be more than 9 billion inhabitants in the world, unless the result of our inability to reach an agreement on climate change leads to a disaster of unimaginable proportions before that time. What remains clear is that, in this crowded world, the lack of natural resources, in particular water and energy, will become the basis of new and deeper international and local conflicts. These conflicts will require the development of effective preventive measures for confronting unrest, as well as the new threats and risks in an increasingly complex world. Among these measures, an essential one is education on peace and gender equality. Consequently, the relevance, significance, importance and transcendence of the University in fulfilling its mission and in implementing the guidelines of the General Assembly, which are aimed at preparing new generations to achieve the goals related to sustainable development, the protection of human rights and climate change mitigation and monitoring measures, will contribute to a better and more stable peaceful coexistence. In turn, the University will contribute with ideas, in collaboration with other members of the United Nations System, towards the creation of new conceptual and methodological frameworks that enable the possibility of measuring and monitoring progress in conflict prevention and allow for a greater, more harmonious and peaceful coexistence.

80. Through this strategy, by 2020 the University will have reinforced its ability to train new generations in the resolution and transformation of increasingly complex and interdependent conflicts. Similarly, the work conducted will have strengthened its position in providing quality postgraduate education and training of governmental and civil society actors. The process of academic reform will be re-evaluated constantly to ensure academic excellence and harmony in the analysis of old and new conflicts, the causes and characteristics in each region and, in particular, the complicated links between political, ethnic and religious causes and criminal activity. This greater capacity for analysis needs to be transformed into curricula, specific education programmes and training opportunities for a range of actors. This relaunch will make it possible for the University to design a long-term perspective to contribute substantially to the institutional work of effective and cooperative multilateralism.

III. Conclusions

81. The analysis made by the founders of the University 35 years ago with regard to world conflict was prophetic, to say the least. As stated in the appendix to the Charter of the University, "the persistence of war in the history of mankind and the growing threats against peace in recent decades jeopardize the very existence of the human race and make it imperative that peace should no longer be viewed as a negative

concept, as the end of conflict or as a simple diplomatic compromise, but rather that it should be achieved and ensured through the most valuable and most effective resource that man possesses: education". Never has this been more relevant than at the present moment, with the emergence of asymmetric threats and terrorist actions of global reach, as well as a change of unprecedented magnitude in global political and strategic relations, generating greater global destabilization and a decrease in the effectiveness of the multilateral system.

82. The University is carrying out a mission that is increasingly central to the future of the world. Education for peace must be expanded until it touches all people everywhere, convincing them that armed conflict must be relegated to the past. This will only be accomplished through the ongoing training of future world leaders from Governments, NGOs and the private sector at the academic level in peaceful conflict resolution and the relationship between peace, development, human rights and environmental protection as conditions for economic development and increased equality.

83. For the University to accomplish the mission that it has been given by the General Assembly, Member States must take the lead in supporting that mission by recognizing the institution through generous financial contributions that will make it possible for the University to offer its programmes of study to all students who wish to participate in them and facilitating the University's operations in host countries. To accomplish the required adjustment to impact future generations of world leaders, the General Assembly may consider augmenting the capacity of the University by providing resources through assessed budgetary contributions for a limited period of five years, until the transformation is accomplished and extrabudgetary resources become available.